# BALLET TODAY

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UGUST
953

OYAL DANISH
ALLET PREVIEW

Valter Gore
— Fresh Ideas

ALLET THEATRE
EASON OPENS

Grey & Field
— in "Spectre"

VILL IT BE A
A FUTURE?

Cue from
Fonteyn — "Fun"

Ballet Digest
— the ballet
month in news
and pictures

Roland Petit

SOME DELECTABLE

# Ballet Music

RECORDINGS

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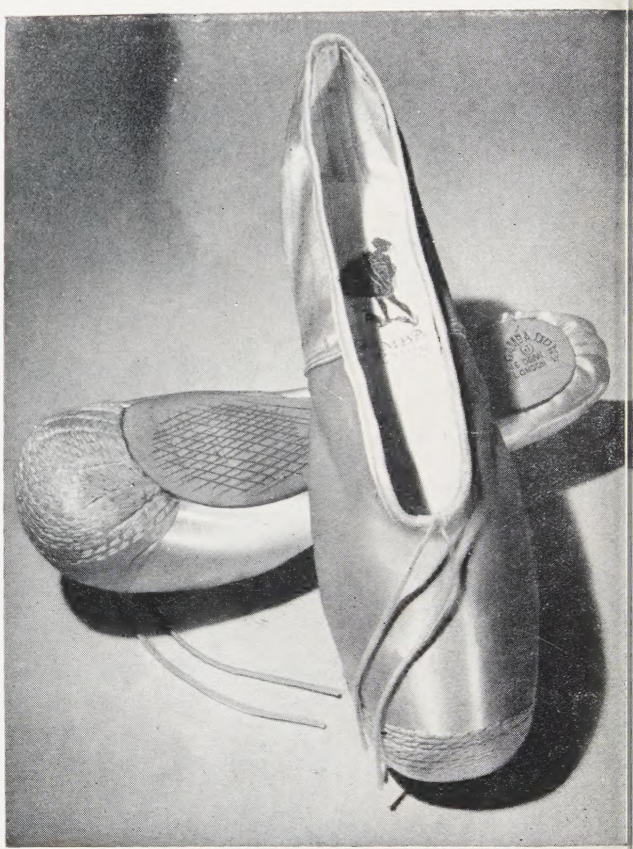

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AUGUST 1953 VOLUME 6 NUMBER 7

# ballet to-day

⊙ David Paltenghi in Television's "Shop Window" Programme.

(Photo-Records)

## Preview . .

LISTENING to Robert Helpmann's programme "Desert Island Discs" choice of records on the BBC reminded me of what seems a Sadler's Wells omission of some importance.

**Why no new ballet from Helpmann?**

During the programme Helpmann played a piece by Sibelius, remarking "one of my ambitions is to create a ballet upon this." Whether Sibelius is a good ballet choice is not the point here—just as well! But surely Helpmann's ambition to create this ballet should open Covent Garden's doors to him without question?

**How many other choreographers**

### "3-A" DAY

**are nursing ambitions that might end the weary trek of the inconsequential which the Wells have presented?**

That is a question which should interest Ninette de Valois. The answer could be important to her, the company and the audience.

**ON another page a writer asks if the "3-A" day has arrived. It would certainly seem that ballet needs the three (and four) act ballet now. In harness with today's theatre and cinema thinking, altogether larger spectacle is required. The short ballet is no longer an audience proposition.**

The position is that few companies can afford mounting full-length ballets. But no company is going to survive on shorts. In the United States some 5,000 cinemas are closing because they cannot afford conversion to new stereophonic techniques — and cannot afford to survive without them! A vicious circle, indeed.

**Many ballets groups will close, too. Fewer new small companies will start. Only the huge international companies will continue. And I forecast two things for them. 1 — An even harder path to success than before. 2 — Very real success for the few who survive.**

This may seem rather hard. It is. But, in common with all the arts, ballet must face the encroachment of many factors. We may loathe it in life, but in art it is aesthetically good: the survival of the fittest. The day of the shoddy and catchpenny is gone. The struggle upcoming will leave much debris in its wake.

BUT IT WILL PRODUCE GREAT BALLET, GREAT DANCERS.

### SUBVERSIVE?

The full list of distinguished composers whose work has been removed from American State Department libraries in over sixty countries is: George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Roger Sessions and Randall Thompson.

**Virgil Thomson is one of America's most brilliant critics and composers, remembered for his music to a Gertrude Stein opera. His THE HARVEST ACCORDING with choreography by Agnes de Mille is the most important new work in Ballet Theatre's repertoire. Aaron Copland has two works in the repertoire—RODEO (perhaps the company's most popular ballet) and BILLY THE KID. Both hailed as typical Americana! Copland is a Pulitzer Prize winner and has the New York Critics Award.**

Leonard Bernstein has New York's most popular musical to his credit—WONDERFUL TOWN with Rosalind Russell. His FANCY FREE ballet for this season was used as a basis for the film ON THE TOWN.

In future these composers—except Gershwin whose PORGY & BESS and other classics are safe, Gershwin being dead—will "have to be screened for security clearance."

### THE NEW CRITICS

Where are the young critics in ballet? The question formed itself as I read some advertising by the London EVENING STANDARD. Their theatre critic, the advertising said, spoke with the youth of the theatre. Perhaps.

*But who speaks for youth in ballet?*

**BALLET TODAY is tired of history, tired of genesis and the encyclopaediac, tired of "she danced well . . . but, ah, Pavlova . . ." as a type of criticism. Tired, tired, tired of this look-backwardism in contemporary ballet.**

We want to speak for young ballet, for new dancers, for fresh talent. But where are the young critics, the new writers? We expect no Bernard Shaw to throw himself upon our manuscript-reading hearths . . . but surely some young, creative minds are turning to ballet?

**Let's hear from them! BALLET TODAY is ready to cooperate with young ballet writers working towards experience and a place in the printing sun. The difficulties we know too well — not being grey haired by years and we might be able to help overcome them.**

*What inexperience can sell is novelty . . . ideas. You have our address, so again — let's hear from you!*

⊙ Claudia Algeranova and Vladimir Brosko who opened a tour with Algeranoff, Dorothy Stevenson, Angelo Andes and Consuelo Carmona under the title "Ensemble de Ballet" in Eastbourne. (Photo: Roger Wood)

# *ALICE IN A HOMEGROUND WONDERLAND*

**Ballet in Review**

**by PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND**

**FESTIVAL BALLET opened their London season at Festival Hall with Michael Charnley's ballet adaptation of the Lewis Carroll book to Horovitz music, decoration by Kenneth Rowell and a narration by Anton Dolin.**

It was obvious from the first tableau that the audience were ready to cheer every stage picture reminiscent of rotagravure prints in well-remembered schoolday books. And I was in a particularly fortunate position to judge this ALICE as a ballet—that is, as a stage work of dance, decor and music conveying a plot of its own volition:

I have never read Lewis Carroll.

## MEANINGLESS

**To me the thing was meaningless and unfunny. Only by the very greatest regard for a childhood favourite could I have excused the unbelievably deplorable production which marred several examples of fine dancing. And I had no such regard.**

By this time the ragged production, especially the lighting, will have been tidied. The tautness missing on the first night may well now exist. But the decor cannot have improved and this was the first failure of the ballet. Rowell's costumes were good, some of them extremely so. But his decor was shockingly bad. The front drop was centre-parted (of course it didn't close when expected!) and both this and other drops had a wet, watercolour look more like a first rough than a hung curtain.

Charnley's choreography for John Gilpin (White Rabbit) sometimes confused loose-limb movement with near-contortionism, but Gilpin brought the one thread of continuity to the ballet. Belinda Wright (Alice) looked rather adult and sharp-faced instead of round and childish, but the sweetness of Alice was another saving grace.

## THE KEY

**To an uninitiate there seemed hundreds of Disneyish characters, some costumed extremely well, some dancing well-varied ideas. The dragonflies sequence was particularly melodic, although overlong. The turtles and lobsters, whiting and snail sequence was perfectly dressed and well expressed.**

*What is the key to the failure?*

As a preliminary solution I would suggest Charnley's mistake on literalism. He has taken what is obviously a novel of pure fantasy and illusion. Instead of creating a ballet illusion to carry the book's illusion he did the pedestrian thing of staging illusion realistically. A tale told in soft, fictional lines (I am guessing this) has been recreated in hard, true-to-life lines. What it required was the equivalent of rough, suggested strokes rather than fully-mirrorlike portraits. There is a general look of solidity and heaviness where airy gentleness was needed.

⊙ **ALICE (Belinda Wright) and MAD HATTER (Keith Beckett)**

A fairy atmosphere should have been created, the transition from real tree to Wonderland and, more so, the awakening did not register. A much swifter, tighter production would have been essential to attain the eye-deceiving magic which ALICE lived through.

## ADMISSION

**I feel that, by having narration right from curtain rise, Charnley admitted immediately that ALICE was not conveyable by dance. There was either far too little narration or there should have been none whatsover. I have often complained of lengthy programme notes.**

This ALICE IN WONDERLAND would have needed a give-away volume of the book.

To summarise: No story-carrying power whatsoever. Complete lack of illusion or atmosphere. Overlong. Cut by half, redecorated and given a more plot-holding Alice this ballet could have come over.

**As it was however, it must be judged a bad future.**

# Pakistan Jooss

**IF it is fair that a critic see every possible work, it is equally fair that he should not have to sit through more than half of a bad programme.**

**I sat through half of Bulbul and his Oriental Ballet at the Scala on June 15.**

The only piece worth remembering, by coincidence, is LEST WE FORGET. This ballet depicts the Bengal racketeer-famine of 1943, one of Pakistan's most tragic periods. Here the work of the full company is given a taughtness and dramatic intensity very reminiscent of some of Jooss.

## SCOPE

It is obvious that a very real scope exists in contemporary subject material being translater balletically. The other pieces in the first half, unfortunately, were of the antique variety and hopelessly poor in comparison with good Asiatic dancing.

I will certainly welcome another company ready to present a programme of the mental stature of LEST WE FORGET.

*CONSTANTIA, by Dollar*

# BALLET THEATRE

**● The season which opened at Covent Garden on July 13 brought three works new to London. Two of these, ALEKO and TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S MERRY PRANKS were reviewed for "Ballet Today" in Venice by Robert Patterson. The other, HARVEST ACCORDING will be reveiwed in the next issue.**

## ★ TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S MERRY PRANKS

THIS was coldly received, and with reason. Richard Strauss's glittering music completely swamps the stage action except during those few moments when a lyrical mood prevails.

Babillé's choreography perforce shows little invention except in the quiet finale, with the result that the shop-keepers have little to do except to jump about aimlessly. The haunting beauty of line that gives Ruth Ann Koesun's dancing such distinction came as a momentary relief from all this, as did the short *pas de deux* by Barbara Lloyd and Enrique Martinez. Eric Braun as Till danced brilliantly whenever he had the chance; his ballon is remarkable.

But why his make-up should have resembled that of the village idiot rather than a cunning rascal is difficult to understand. The orchestra, in particular the horns, played brilliantly under Joseph Levine. Tom Keogh's costumes were true to period, but his decors was flimsy and unconvincing.

## ★ ALEKO

ALEKO is a masterpiece. Inspired by Pushkin's "Gypsies" Massine and Marc Chagall have created a drama not unlike CARMEN in its violence and passion.

To complement such a theme Tchaikowsky's comparatively little known trio for violin, piano, and 'cello was chosen, and vividly orchestrated throughout by ERNO RAPEE. The ballet is in four scenes, and for the third, the scene by the lake, Chagall has painted a back-drop rivalling Picasso's in "Le Tricorne."

Headed by Alicia Alonso as the ill-fated gypsy, Youskevitch as "Aleko" her cast off lover, John Kriza as the successful rival, and Don Spottswood as the gypsy girl's father (what a moving performance the latter is!), practically every member of Ballet Theatre appears in the large cast. Massine's wonderful choreography reveals continuous counterpoints of movement, and also many opportunities for the most diverse character dancing, such as the portrayal of performing animals and eccentric types. Because of this each member of the cast forms a vital part of the whole, and no weakness is apparent.

## ★ FIRST NIGHT AT COVENT GARDEN

**APART from ALEKO, reviewed from Venice by Robert Patterson above, the first night of American National Ballet Theatre's season at Covent Garden, July 13, had LES SYLPHIDES, FANCY DRESS and THEME & VARIATIONS.**

Surprisingly, I found Balanchin's THEME & VARIATIONS the exciting work of the programme. Here were Alonso and Youskevitch in classical choreography which suited their technique. To Tchaikovsky's Theme and Variations from Suite No. 3 for Orchestra, the ballet has a dramatic movement not often associated in my mind with the cold Balanchin.

**LES SYLPHIDES which opened the programme showed a Melissa Hayden of some depth. There was a slowness, a "thoughtful bounce" to her dancing that brought the watcher's mind into Fokine's atmosphere as should be the intention. Both this and the Festival Ballet production seemed to catch —both in the one week—something of the Fokine intention so often lost.**

FANCY FREE was still its old self. An effervescent contemporary bubble that will burst some day when sexy sailors and good time girls are decadent. Until then: good fun with some dancing from Kriza, Martinez and Bruan of good, strong quality.

**First Impressions**

**My first impressions of the season are not as happy as I would wish them. Alonso was, on the first night, well below the standard I expect from her. Youskevitch, too, was sometimes slightly less than exciting although he brought a masculine force and technical power to THEME which was a pinnacle in male dancing. Kriza, on the contrary, has improved since I last saw him. So has Hayden, although this first evening showed little of her upon which to judge.**

Principal complaint is of the general production. A tiredness was apparent to me and it matched the lost greatness of the decor. The wings, especially, were shoddy. SYLPHIDES and THEME suffered badly from decor long overdue for replenishment.

# FONTEYN'S "FUN"

**MARGOT FONTEYN makes few critical pronouncements on ballet. But, when she does, have you noticed how ofter her reply to a serious question is one using the word FUN?**

Is it a lack of vocabulary? A facile answer to the so-many, so-similar questions? Neither. Fonteyn sums up an attitude that is good for ballet but not very unanimous.

Critics are serious, our job calls for finding flaws and passing a wet blanket over enthusiasm when it looks out-of-hand. The initiates are too serious, afraid to enjoy their evening in case some mysterious observer mistakes them for first-time balletgoers.

### BE FRANK

**Let us be frank: initiates cannot support the mammoth cost of ballet. Only a wide public can do it. Critics are making a career out of sour-grape pessimism. Only optimism can keep ballet successfully alive.**

★ COULD IT BE WHAT BALLET NEEDS?

The serious knowledge is essential, the dancer needs it, the public can be helped to better understanding by it.

**BUT NO PUBLIC CAN BE PERSUADED INTO A THEATRE BY IT!**

The only thing which will persuade the normal person to ring his money on the Covent Garden till rather than that of the Odeon or Garrick is ENTERTAINMENT.

### "OUTSIDERS"

**There is a narrow circle in ballet that would rather die in a subsidised, inbred hothouse than live well, successfully with normal people . . . the "outsiders." The old name for these people is snob but a snob was one who hurt only himself by his preciousness. The ballet snobism is creating an atmosphere that offends the ordinary entertainment seeker. He, arriving for the first time, feels awkwardly aware that the welcome mat is rather more starch than fibre.**

*This will quickly make the mat—to keep up the analogy — neither starch nor fibre . . . but threadbare.*

I suggest that Margot Fonteyn has keyed the basis upon which ballet can survive as a popular art and entertainment: fun. I do not mean that every work must be supposedly humourous—save me from that—but I think a more theatrically conscious approach must be made to ballet.

Ballet has the worst press managers and publicists in the business and that includes critics and regular balletgoers. Leading a cloistered existence in which praise is hypocritical and truth more often meanness or envy, those of us who can best promote ballet are parasiting as easily as possible.

### PROOF

**The proof: when did you last think of how to help new dancer or new balletgoer? When last strike up conversation with an obvious newcomer standing alone at the bar? When last send your old ballet magazines to a hospital or home? When last suggest that your local library subscribe to a ballet magazine, buy new ballet books?**

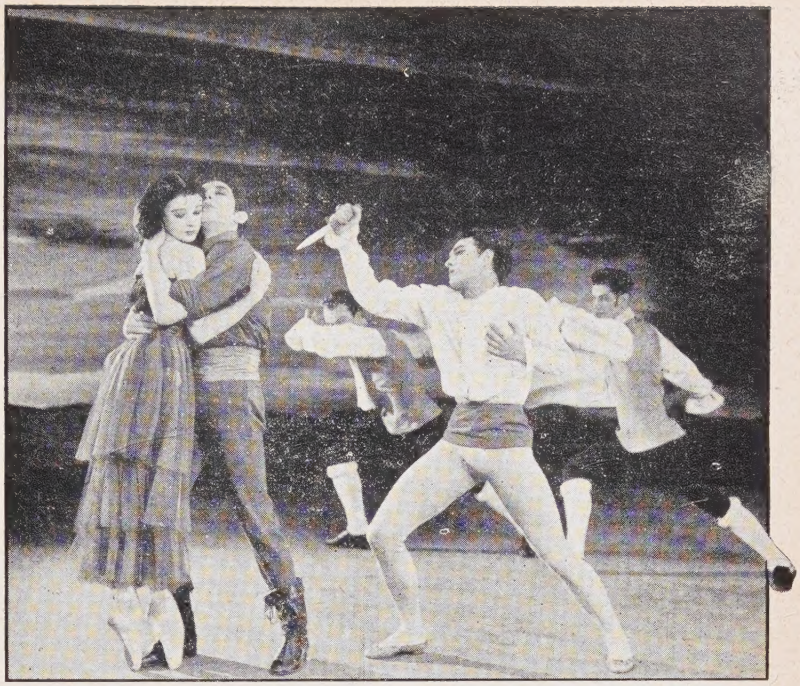
And, if I may ask other critics, when last did you strike out yet another gloomy paragraph because you found something interesting to put there, in your criticism's shop window? The flaws must be pointed out . . . but must they monopolise?

*Fonteyn's fun, normal optimism . . these are the things ballet needs. And needs badly.*

## ● Ballet in Thread by A. Judah — 1

— BALLET NEGRES —

# *second thoughts on blood wedding*



⊙ ELAINE FIFIELD, DAVID POOLE, PIRMIN TRECU

**TO make a facile generalism with a strong undercurrent of truth: Diaghilev's success was achieved through his forging together the various talents integral to a ballet. Not merely introducing collaboraters — but forcing into full contact the choreographer, composer and designer.**

Did BLOOD WEDDING at Sadler's Wells have something akin to this? Was the collaboration of Lambert, Rodrigues and Apivor a returning to full co-operation in ballet? There are some signs that it was.

The three artists had in common an interest in things Spanish. This interest was deep enough to flavour the ballet deeply, in contrast to the synthetic results obtained by other collaborators who recently spent months absorbing atmosphere in Venice.

### WHY?

**Does the ground of why co-operation is precious need restating? Perhaps. In ballet an illusion has to be created that is visually projectable and instantaneously acceptable by the audience. To do this the illusion must be unanimous — any divergence on stage will distract away from the general picture and bring the audience's brain into play with a specific detail.**

Specific details cannot hold illusion. That is the byword of the magician—and a rule best kept by those who would stage ballet.

The ballet in which an ordinary audience (I am excepting the professional critic whose job it is to look deeper) can break down various parts and examine them variously while the ballet progresses . . . that ballet has failed from the first criteria of effective theatre: carrying illusion.

Such an audienec breakdown occurs when there has been a lack of full agreement among the creators. What comes first in this creation? The theoretical answer is plot, music, choreography, decor. These four are often juxtaposed according to who conceives the ballet's theme first. But, once agreed, and the four creators present, the parts must dictate to these creators.

**IS CO-OPERATION BACK IN BALLET?**

### MUSTS

**The music must evoke the plot, the choreography must carry the plot and 'move' on top of the music. The decor should tone with the music, create immediately the illusion called for by the plot and background as fittingly as possible the ballet's movement. Costuming must be mastered by the line of dance, in character with the plot's people and basically simple for dancing.**

Without going further into the specific necessities it should be clear by now that a single divergent talent—a dress made because it pleases the designer, a dance pattern invented to show off the choreographer's trick idea—can throw the whole work out of focus.

Ballet is not a one man art (writing is, painting is) but demands a compromise from the artists involved.

That is why a "head artist" (a Diaghilev, I am sorry to have to say) is needed to be the only one refusing to compromise. Such a director can demand compromise where he sees it needed, refuse to accept it where it is only an excuse for not trying again.

### SIGNS

**Diaghilev does not, I hardly need add, exist at Sadler's Wells Theatre. But BLOOD WEDDING showed signs that a friendly co-operation certainly did exist. Even more definite signs caution that a new Diaghilev is not on our nearby horizons. So such co-operation as the Rodrigues-ApIvor-Lambert team provided must be encouraged as our hope of greater ballet.**

Last month I urged a fast retry on their part. These afterthoughts are in the way of added persuasion for just such a second attempt.

**I think that a great deal of our future depends upon the results of this co-operation. I would like to see a second step of that future very soon.**

⊙ Left: Gore's HOOPS with Rowell decor and Poulenc music is a circus-atmosphere work in which the dancers experiment with the fun in moving with hoops. Photograph (all on this page by Duncan Melvin) shows Domini Callaghan and De Lutry.

Above: THE GENTLE POLTERGEIST, the story of a young bride's infatuation for a kindly ghost! To music by Faure, decor by Harry Cordwell.

THIS is an 'on paper' preview of Walter Gore's new company and its repertoire. No 'near London' appearance has yet been made by the company. Gore's feelings are that the small, gay company—interpreting today's mood and spirit—stands a chance of creative worth.

Certainly, the financial risks being less, the scope for experimental progress is greater. Gore's repertoire sounds a fresh note and, though unseen, seems worthy of hopeful enthusiasm.

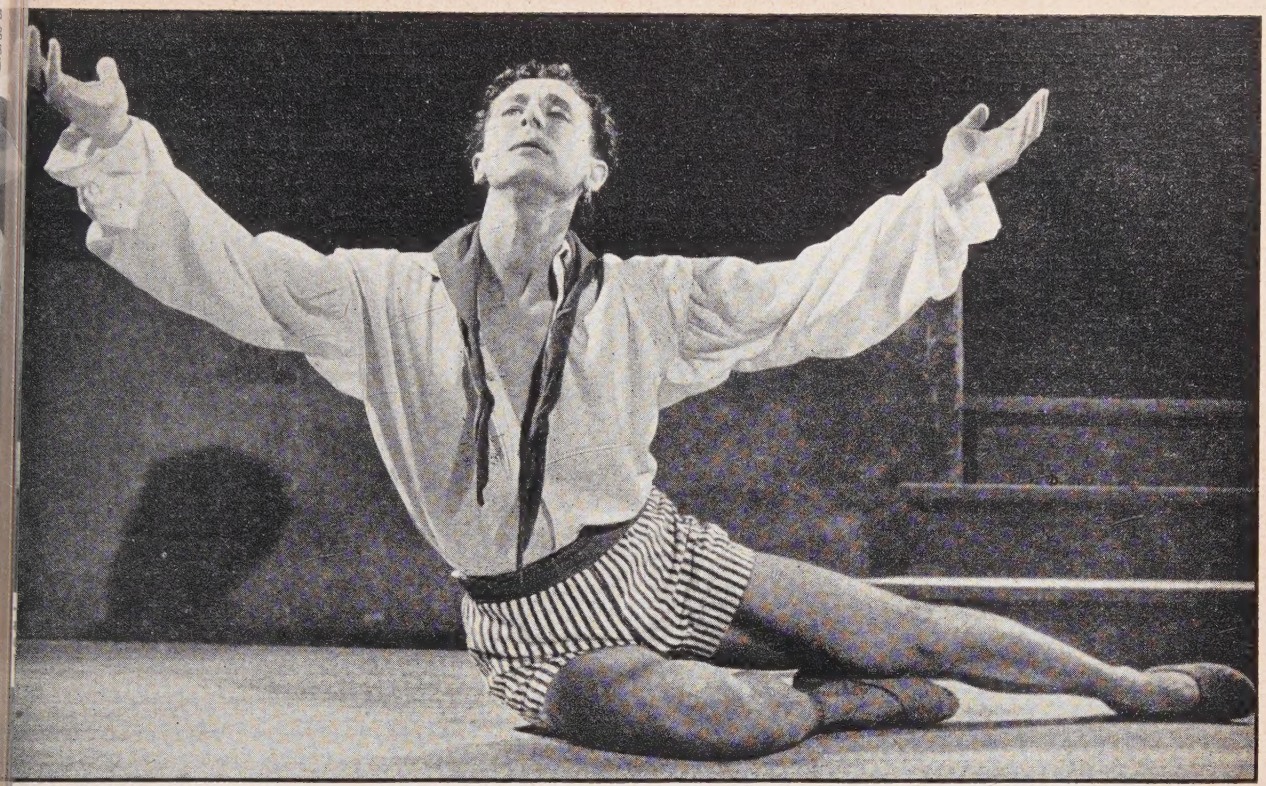
# Gore's REPERTOIRE

THE repertoire, apart from the three ballets from which photographs appear on this page, consists of CLASSICAL to Rossini, with Cordwell decor. Graceful and lyrical, a contemporary experiment in sheer classicism.

TANCREDI AND GLORINDA is based on a Crusades legend. ROMANTIC EVENING is "a romantic ballet with no story" based on early 19th-century lithographs. STREET GAMES is child's fantasy strictly for fun. MR. PUNCH is the old Punch and Judy show in typically Gore manner.

Dancing with the Gore Ballet are Paula Hinton, Domini Callaghan, Michel De Lutry, Cecil Bates and—of course—Gore himself.

⊙ Right: Walter Gore in LIGHT FANTASTIC, based on the adage that "in Spring a young man's fancy turns to . . ." and the obstacles in fancy's way!



⊙ BORGE RALOV IN "NAPOLI"

# THE ROYAL DANISH BALLET

**IN Denmark, dancing as an art existed as early as the 18th century, but the public presentation of ballet—although still restricted to simple entrées and divertissements—dates from the opening of the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, in 1748.**

*Maitre de ballét,* French or Italian, followed in rapid succession until the arrival of Vincenzo Galeotti, who joined the Royal Theatre in 1775, in the triple capacity of *maitre de ballét,* choreographer, and *premier danseur.*

Galeotti (born, Florence, 1733) had danced on many European stages and had worked under Angiolini and Noverre. During Galeotti's forty years' service at the Royal Theatre he created an efficient company of dancers and established a repertory of some fifty ballets.

He was succeeded by Antoine Bournonville, solo dancer and director of dancing at the Royal Theatre from 1793 to 1823, who was a pupil of Noverre, Gardel, and Auguste Vestris.

Antoine's son, August, born at Copenhagen, in 1805, was destined to exert the greatest influence upon the development of Danish ballet.

He learned his "first steps" from his father and completed his studies under Auguste Vestris.

The young Bournonville was engaged at the Paris Opéra as solo dancer in 1826 and accompanied the French troupe during their London season in 1828. He returned to Copenhagen in 1829, to work at the Royal Theatre for some fifty years, as solo dancer, *maitre de ballét,* and choreographer, and later as a producer of opera. Bournonville re-built the company, founded a new repertory, and won for Ballet a status equal to that enjoyed by Drama and Opera.

## ● CYRIL BEAUMONT PREVIEWS THE COMPANY WHICH OPENS THIS MONTH

### FIFTY BALLETS

**He devised some fifty ballets, a number of which are still performed today. Bournonville was a romantic and his ballets were either inspired by historical themes, for instance ARCONA, VALKYRIEN, or VALDEMAR, or by the picturesque folk dances and legends of certain countries. So his NAPOLI is set in Italy, LE TOREADOR in Spain, BRIDAL FEAST IN HARDANGER in Norway, LA KERMESSE DE BRUGES in Holland.**

A particular feature of his ballets is the excellent opportunities afforded male dancers.

After Bournonville's death in 1879, the company's efficiency declined and the choreography of his ballets began to lose in detail and quality.

But, thanks to the efforts of Hans Beck, the most distinguished Danish male dancer at the beginning of this century, and his partner, Valborg Borchensius, much of Bournonville's choreography was preserved for future generations.

The invasion of Western Europe in 1909 by the Russian dancers under Diaghilev exerted little influence in Copenhagen, nevertheless the brief visits to that city of Fokine in 1925 and of Balanchin in 1930 were not without their effect. Harald Lander, a young dancer in the company, longed to see the progress of ballet in other countries. In 1927 he went to New York and studied the Russian school of technique, took lessons in Spanish dancing, and travelled to Mexico to study its folk dance.

In 1929 he returned to Copenhagen and achieved a considerable reputation as character dancer. Two years later he became Instructor in Ballet and Director of Character Dancing. That same year he made his début as choreographer with a ballet called GAUCHO. In 1932 he was appointed *maitre de ballét* and director of all schools connected with the ballet company.

### ENCOURAGED

**One of his first acts was to enlist the aid of Valborg Borchensius, then in honourable retirement, to help him to revive and record a number of Bournonville ballets, for he regarded such works as an integral part of the theatre repertory. Lander has created some 25 ballets of his own, devised many dances for plays and operas, and produced many works by well known choreographers.**

He has also encouraged Danish dancers to arrange ballets themselves, for instance, Borge Ralov: LA VEUVE DANS LE MIROIR, THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS, and TWELVE BY THE POST; and Niels Bjorn Larsen: THE DETHRONED TAMER OF WILD ANIMALS and SYLVIA.

The Royal Danish Ballet will make its London debut on August 11th for a fortnight's season, when it will present a repertory of nine ballets chosen, with one exception, to afford a panorama of Danish choreography.

Galeotti will be represented by THE WHIMS OF CUPID AND THE MAITRE DE BALLET (1786), the oldest ballet still performed. There will be four Bournonville ballets: THE DANCING-SCHOOL, a *divertissement* in the pure French style; LA SYLPHIDE, Taglioni's famous ballet, which Bournonville adapted to suit his pupil Lucile Grahn; NAPOLI, a three-act ballet inspired by Italian folk dance, which has many attractive dances and an exciting finale; and A FOLK TALE, which tells of the substitution of a fairy changeling for a baby girl, a ballet about trolls and strange beings that live in a magic mountain.

ERIK BRUHN AND KIRSTEN SIMONE IN BOURNONVILLE'S "ET FOLKESAGN"

Harald Lander is represented by his famous Eskimo ballet QAARTSILUNI, a Danish parallel to LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS. The rising generation is represented by Birger Bartholin's ROMEO AND JULIET. Finally, there will be the Danes' version of COPPELIA, which differs from that shown in other countries.

Originally produced by Glaseman in 1896, it was later revised by Hans Beck; the production is noted for its speed and gaiety and its mimed scenes.

**The remaining ballet is GRADUATION BALL, which David Lichine recently revived for the company. From the foregoing, I think it will be agreed that the Danish season promises to be both novel and entertaining.**

☆ KIRSTEN SIMONE IN "ET FOLKESAGN"

☆ NIELS BJORN IN "ET FOLKESAGN"

☆ MARGARETHE SCHANNE IN "LA SYLPHIDE"

# SPECTRE
## *on Television*

*NEITHER Beryl Grey nor John Field came out of this incredibly bad telecast of SPECTRE DE LA ROSE with much credit.*

*Not—to use a cliche of British TV criticism—that it was their fault!*

*For a ballet so completely aerial as this the BBC used a top camera looking down on Field's leaps. He might as well have kept to the ground. For his entrance through the window the camera caught him from waist level up. For his exit—the ballet's peak—the camera again looked down and caught his swift landing and three steps away. And so the climax was lost as surely as was the ballet itself.*

*Lighting was atrocious. Field had no closeup, Grey was in closeup, with harsh white removing all features, far too often. The lilt was nowhere to be seen—instead this SPECTRE dragged and bored. The music was as it should be but gave the impression of being completely separate from the dancing.*

*This SPECTRE was better heard, not seen.*

**. . . but what about the next issue? Why not make a definite order with your newsagent or send a subscription (14/- for one year) to BALLET TODAY, 15 Penrhyn Road, Kingston, Surrey.**

# Ballet in Melba

## —AND VIOL
## ELVIN as TA

AN advance preview of
film which opens in Lo
Violetta Elvin and a grou

Their part in the film is
THE DEVIL in which Elv
in her Abbess role.

### EERIE M

These scenes were shot at
the photograph top right sh
relaxing in the stalls bar.

Bottom right is a scene fr
which conveys some of the
and costumes.

To the left is an exclusive
in her dressing room after
her is Rae Cocking who w
Modern Melba" in a contest
film's exploitation.

### MORE TO

An incidental note here
an old friend of hers—from
SONG OF NORWAY—in th

Depending on the succes
Elvin is preparing to make
From advance shots the
promises to be better-than-a

13

# ballet digest

### ●BEHIND THE LUDMILLA NEWS

The bald announcement that Ludmilla Tcherina had been signed by Universal-Internation in Hollywood left one detail out. The tests made for Ludmilla were the longest and most expensive ever carried out by a studio. Roughly £10,000 was spent on them!

### ●HOW NEW IS NEW?

Readers who saw the bottom-side-of-a-dancer photographs in the American LIFE magazine, and the letter from Luis Carlos Bello Parga of Brazil, must have wondered: how new is the ballet film?

Currently we tend to thing of the ballet theme in films as new, even if not original itself. But, as the letter from Bello Parga revealed, a ballet sequence film was shot as early as 1924 by Rene Clair. Entitled ENTR'ACTE, this *avant garde* movie showed several slow motion ballet sequences shot from below a glass floor upon which the girl danced.

So LIFE was wrong in its 'first time it's been done' claim by nearly three decades. And I now await a stream of letters on pre-1924 ballet films . . .

### ●SADLER'S WELLS —NO COMPETITION

Assuming that the half-million dollars Sadler's Wells will take out of New York balletgoing pockets is all that is possible, no other company will venture to rival the season.

Both Ballet Theatre and N.Y. City Ballet will be in Europe, though poor business may yet drive Ballet Theatre home before schedule. American reports warn that Sol Hurok, Sadler's Wells impressario in the U.S., may have a struggle to make a financial success of the tour. Last year's visit of the junior S.W. caused bad feeling at many box-offices where the public accused managements of 'deluding' them with the name Sadler's Wells.

As plans stand Ballet Theatre will open their 1954 American tour in December this year, NYCB opening later in the same month. This leaves a gap from October to December when New York will be without a major ballet presentation. Reason is, again, that no enough money will be left over for ballet after the S.W. season.

### ●A CRUSADE TAKES ROOT

Anatole Chujoy's campaign for recognised ballet-teaching standards is gaining impetus in the American DANCE NEWS monthly.

It needs no thought to support his fight against the parents who topple young girls onto their toes before the correct age. Nor will anyone who gives his time to raising classroom standards have to beg our support. Obviously there is money in pleasing the parents and a neat spivery in lax teaching.

We hardly need care about our advertisers in this magaine, they all have names wihch guarantee their teaching criteria. But, throughout the country, there exist hundreds of back-parlour "schools" where teaching standards do not need raising . . . they need introducing!

Is there anything which can be done to either professionalize these teachers, or can they be forced out of ballet?

This is not a question upon which the Editor can pass sole judgement. It needs the co-operation of readers who have constructive iedas or information on the subject. From these we will be very pleased to hear. Meanwhile we can wish Chujoy the success such a campaign as his commands.

(*continued on page* 17)

### ●THAT WHOLE SEVEN POUNDS!

The Esher Standard Contract for ballet will soon be in active force through Actors Equity.

Called for in the contract is a seven pound minimum for *corps* during performance and four pounds for rehearsal. Rehearsal and performance hours are limited and overtime payments demanded by the contract, as are compensation payments after injury sustained in class, rehearsal or on stage.

It is obvious that, in London, nobody can live on £7 (much less, £4) who is not the rare owner of a pre-war flat at tiny rental, living with subsidising parents or an heiress.

The fact that, say, £7 is normal salary is bad. That this trade union should make battle royale of achieving it is nonsense.

On sheer economics the basic dancer wage in London must be £10 per *working* week. Rent, food and other expenses do not fluctuate downwards during rehearsal weeks—why should the wage?

Professional dancers' comments on the Equity contract will be welcomed and held in strict confidence.

### ●MR. McCARTHY IN BALLET

The incredible and dangerous senator from Wisconsin, McCarthy, has begun focussing his purge-popped eyes on ballet. He has banned Aaron Copland's music from American state libraries and had a setting by Copland—commissioned for the presidential inaugural concert — deleted at the last moment.

Also affected are five other composers including George Gershwin who, according to U.S. reports, is now "subversive to listen to." A rumour that Sadler's Wells will be "requested" not to use red toned curtains during their tour is unfounded —but—not at all unlikely (see "Preview," page 3).

### ●FESTIVAL BALLET'S CANADIAN TRIP

Very poor business was done by Festival Ballet at the Royal Alexandria theatre in Toronto, Canada. Although seat prices were scaled far up to a 30/- top, the huge theatre took in only a modest £6,000. Much better business was achieved in Montreal with over £10,000 grossed for only three days. The only press report seen is a trade one which managed to use Leslie's previous name and state that the company were opening at Covent Garden in July! So how reliable box-office figures are is open to wide speculation.

### ●200 FOREIGN FILMS BOUGHT

As exclusively forecast in BALLET TODAY last month, Kenneth Rive of London's Berkeley and Continentale cinemas has signed a five-year agreement with the Soviet film industry to distribute its product in this country and throughout the Empire. A number of ballet and dance-interest films will be included and BALLET TODAY will announce full details later.

### ●SADLER'S WELLS U.S. TOUR DATES

Sadler's Wells begin their American tour with a four week engagement at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. This takes them from September 13 through October 11.

After this they tour Philadelphia (Oct. 13-17); Boston (19-24); Toronto (26-28); Montreal (30-31); East Lansing (Nov. 2-3); Detroit (4-5); Lafayette (6-7); Minneapolis (9-11); Winnipeg (12-14); Vancouver (17-21); Seattle (23-25); Portland (26-28); San Francisco (Dec. 1-6); Los Angeles (8-16); Denver (18-19); Chicago (22-Jan. 3); Atlanta (5-6); New Orleans (8-9); Washington (12-14); Cleveland (15-17); Pittsburgh (19-21); Baltimore (22-23).

The New York season opens with a gala U.S. premiere of LAC in four acts. Also in the repertoire: SLEEPING BEAUTY, SHADOW, HOMAGE, PATINEURS, CHECKMATE, DON JUAN, DAPHNIS & CHLOE, SYLVIA, GISELLE. Seven of these are now productions to the United States.

Europe Dances : 2

# Folk Dance Revival Sweeps Hungary

By LAWRENCE KIRWAN

**FOLK DANCING HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST COLOURFUL FEATURES OF LIFE IN HUNGARY. BUT TODAY IT IS ENJOYING A REVIVAL ON A SCALE NEVER BEFORE KNOWN IN THE COUNTRY.**

In the centuries of oppression, first by the Turks and then by the Hapsburgs, the folk dance became one of the most important means of expressing national feelings and upholding the national spirit.

What could not be said in words or deeds the Hungarian people said with their dancing. The spirit and hopes of liberation were expressed in an infinite variety of dance figurations.

The choreography was never noted down. Most of the dances permitted much individual freedom of movement within the basic framework.

## FATHER TO SON

**Dances were handed down from father to son, from the old to the young—a kind of living history of dancing.**

But in recent years, since the ending of German occupation, a national revival has taken place. Folk dancing has been made a national pastime.

Thousands of dance groups have been formed. Research teams of the Institute of Folk Arts tour remote country districts noting down almost forgotten dance forms from the memories of the ancients. Many dances long thought dead, have been discovered and brought back into use.

The ancient herdmen's dances, cane and axe-twirling swineherds' dances and shepherd's dances are seen anew.

New forms have been added to the famous "verbunkos" — the dance from the beginning of the 18th century, whose throbbing rhythm was used in many Beethoven and Liszt compositions.

Many variations of the "Csárdás" paired dance, which expressed resistance to the Hapsburgs before the 1848 revolution, have developed in different parts of the country.

## BOTTLE DANCES

**Then there are the playful and difficult dances like the bottle dances — in which the girls perform with wine bottles balanced on their heads, the broom and cushion dances, the forceful "windstorm dance" by the people of Tápé, chair dances and friendship dances.**

With the dances go a brilliant variety of folk costumes.

Giving impetus and encouragement to the nation-wide movement is the State Folk Company, formed in September 1950, whose purpose is to demonstrate the highest standards of performance and adaptation of the folk dance.

With directors and technical assistants, the company numbers 160 people. Singers, dancers and instrumentalists were picked with great care from thousands of applicants.

The orchestra is made up on the lines of the traditional Hungarian folk orchestras, so-called gipsy orchestras. It consists of violins, violas, 'cellos and doublebass, supplemented by cimbalom, clarinets and shepherd flutes. When performances are not being given the dancers assist in the collection of dance motifs in the countryside.

**And every year there is a national cultural contest in which most of the estimated 3,000 dance groups in the country take part.**

⊙ "CUSHION DANCE" OF KALOSSA. Above, June day festival in Heves county.

# Ballet Month – Coming Events

## EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

**AMERICAN NATIONAL THEATRE BALLET:**

**August 24-26:** CONSTANTIA, THIEF WHO LOVED A GHOST, RODEO and BLACK SWAN pas. **27-29:** BILLY THE KID, SCHUMANN CONCERTO, GRADUATION BALL.

**PILAR LOPEZ COMPANY:**

**August 31-September 2:** First programme of Spanish dance. **Sept. 3-5:** Second programme.

**SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET:**

**Sept. 7-9:** PASTORALE, RAKE'S PROGRESS, ASSEMBLY BALL. **Sept. 10-12:** FETE ESTRANGE, HARLEQUIN IN APRIL, CARTE BLANCHE.

**Note:** CIRCA DE ESPANA is also announced by Ballet Theatre although not listed on the Festival's printed programmes.

## ROLAND PETIT BALLET AT STOLL THEATRE

Aug. 24-29 Deuil en 24 Heures, Cine-Bijou, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice.

31-5 Sept. Deuil en 24 Heures, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice, Carmen.

Sept. 7-12 Deuil en 24 Heures, Cine-Bijou, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice.

Sept. 14-19 Deuil en 24 Heures, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice, Carmen.

Sept. 21-23 Deuil en 24 Heures, Cine-Bijou, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice.

Sept. 24-26 Deuil en 24 Heures, Le Loup, Lady in the Ice. Carmen.

## FESTIVAL BALLET AT FESTIVAL HALL

Aug. 3-8 : Alice, Vilia.

Aug. 10-15 : Nutcracker, Spectre, Bolero, Prince Igor.

## ROYAL DANISH BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

Tues., Aug. 11-13 Amors og Ballet-mesterens Luner, Sylfiden, Qarrtsiluni.

Aug. 14-17 Romeo & Juliet, Coppelia, Grand Pas from Casse.

Aug. 18-20 Konservatoriet, Napoli.

Aug. 21-22 Et Folkesagn, Graduation Ball (matinee of 22nd only).

Aug. 22 (evening) Sylfiden, Napoli.

## BALLET RAMBERT AT SADLERS WELLS THEATRE

Aug. 3-5 Sylphides, Movimientos, Winter Night, Masques.

Aug. 6-8 Giselle, Les Masques.

Aug. 10-12 Swan Lake (Act 2), Fireflies, Dark Elegies, Gala performance.

Aug. 13-15 Sylphides, Past Recalled, Mephisto Waltz, Plaisance.

## INTERNATIONAL BALLET

Aug. 3-8 Bradford Alhambra.

## QUOTES

BRON IN VARIETY: "Jacques d'Amboise cotninues to astonish (in N.Y. City Ballet's 'Con Amore') with his amazing leaps and bounds. In two years the kid will be sending the dames gaga and making them forget all about Andre Eglevski — if he doesn't kill himself with his contortions first."

★ *Prophesy wrapped up in Runyonesque but VARIETY manage a sane, if unballetic, critical summarising of ballet. Their verdict of 'Con Amore' was: delightful fooling.*

RICHARD BUCKLE IN THE OBSERVER: "Ballet is the most hit or miss of the arts, a chancy business, even more hazardous than making mayonaise."

★ *Food for thought, or how green was this particular salad?*

AMERICAN STUDENT INTERVIEWED IN BBC PROGRAMME: "I preferred GLORIOUS DAYS to GLORIANA."

★ *Anna will be pleased!*

## ..... Letters from Ballet Today Readers .....

# *FEDOROVITCH AND ORPHEUS*

**HAVING read the controversial reviews in your April issue of the Opera-Ballet ORPHEUS it was difficult to believe that one review gave no word to the décor, and that the other gave it but sparse comment.**

**This is particularly surprising, as Sophie Fedorovitch's death and the loss this would mean to ballet design must have been foremost in the minds of all at the time of the first production.**

**It is all the more surprising as it seemed inevitable that some interesting comparison might have been drawn between her work for this current production and her work for Ninette de Valois' ballet ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE to the same Gluck music, which was produced at the New Theatre during the early years of the last war.**

**NEW PUBLIC?**

**Some people consider that ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE was given to a the newly-forming ballet audience, before it was fully able to appreciate the ballet's beauty, and that it was on account of this that it was dropped from the company's repertoire after so few performances.**

**This is very much to the loss of the ballet public, for anyone who saw the ballet could scarcely forget the grand simplicity of Sophie Fedorovitch's black and white sets and costumes, relieved in the earthly scene by the colourful peasant costumes and the gentle pinkness of the costumes for the lovers in their dreamlike pas de deux.**

*JANET ROWSON,*
*St.Paul's Street, St.Paul's Bay, Malta*

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Your letter on ballet topics is welcomed. Address it to BALLET TODAY, 15, Penrhyn Road, Kingston, Surrey.

# ballet digest

from page 14

● **IN EDINBURGH**

**CARTE BLANCHE, Walter Gore's new work for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, will be premiered at the Edinburgh Festival. Score is by John Addison, Kenneth Rowell—now a veteran Gore designer—has designed the decor. Date of premiere: September 10.**

● **AND TWO MORE**

Also at the Festival, as previously announced, will be the American National Ballet Theatre. Two not-for-London works will be presented during the Festival: SCHUMANN CONCERTO by Nijinska and CIRCO DE ESPANA by Maracci. Set in the bullring, CIRCO is in five scenes—Entrance to Albanesi music, Praise The Bullfighter to Turina music, Woman and The Nightingale to Granados music, Fire Dance to deFalla and Portrait in Raw Espania to music by Granados and Albanesi.

● **PAVINOFF IN OPERA**

**Rovi Pavinoff has arranged the dance sequences and appears as principal dancer in the road tour of Oscar Straus' THE LAST WALTZ which opened last month in Birmingham.**

● **INGLESBY IN 3D**

Mona Inglesby filled her company's day between class and performance in Barcelona by shooting Spain's first 3D film. This has already been shown in Barcelona. The interesting coincidence here is that, the evening before I had this story, I had spent a few hours with Ernest Borneman and his wife Eva.

Ernest has just directed BETTY SLOW DRAG, a Frankie-and-Johnny type of dance film with overtones, and was responsible for Norman McLaren's intriguing work for the Canadian National Film Board. One of the odd thousand ideas we talked arbout was that of taking a ballet group to Spain and shooting BLOOD WEDDING or a similar atmosphere ballet in actual location. That was Wednesday. Thursday morning brings new that Mona, with customary foresight, has beaten us to the post and not only made a film in Spain but added 3D.

We still may have BLOOD WEDDING on our minds but to Mona goes the first round!

● **ROBBINS CONTRACT**

**Choreographer Jerome Robbins is now director of all dancing in Columbia films. PAL JOEY will be his first assignment.**

● **NO AROVA**

Billposters were as busy as the overworked Festival Ballet on opening day, July 9. At the last moment Sonia Arova was removed from the posters and guest ballerina Svetlova's name overprinted.

Apparently Arova's contract with the company was not renewed on June 26 when it came up for option. One report, quoting Arova, has it that the reason for her leaving was argument over ALICE in which she originally had a role. She was certainly much safer in the stalls on the first night than had she been on stage!

● **NEW YORK WINTER**

**George Balanchin's three-act production of CASSE NOISETTE will open New York City Ballet's Christmass programme. Also scheduled are new works by Ashton and Jerome Robbins.**

● **TALLCHIEF DAY**

Oklahoma's Osage Indian tribe were dancing one day last month in honour of the half-Osage, half-Irish girl who became the ballerina Maria Tallchief.

Fairfax, Oklahoma, is celebrating Maria Tallchief Day every year.

## People Are Talking About....

**Anton Dolin dancing BOLERO again . . . Petit's non-arrival for three different managements . . . de Valois curtain speech 'you'll hardly notice us when we come back' . . . Gopal's coming London season . . . that 90% "no more ballet on television" vote a national newspaper counted . . . some of the programmes which have caused it . . . the critic who, talking of the next few London months, managed to ignore the coming Ballet Theatre and discuss the City Ballet (not coming at all) at length . . . the film star look of Belinda Wright . . . the number of ballet features in national magazines including a backlife of a Sadler's Wells "corps" members and an EVERYBODYS cover for the lovely Sonia Arova . . . yet another promised Negro dance group here . . . does Dunham buy them out in advance? . . . the letter critic Peter Craig-Raymond received telling him to follow OPERA-editor Lord Harewood's lead and take a stage job to discover ballet's difficulties . . . the reply he sent mentioning his several months as a stage producer smoothing out difficulties and not asking irreverend critics to assist . . . Cecil Beaton's graphic line sketches for VOGUE on the Coronation . . . why not a similar Beatonequisite on Covent Garden . . . and in and out of Covent Garden people were talking about Alicia Alonso . . . the magnificent Alsonso . . . Her talk to the London Ballet Club which showed her as a beautiful — and intelligent — woman . . . . Mary Skeaping doing a full-length work for Alonso's Cuban group . . . .**

☆ From ballet to films—a well-worn trail made news by the very obvious charm of Laura Elliott whose film debut is in JAMAICA RUN for Paramount.

# REPORT FROM *Reyna*

## IN PARIS

**ON June 10th the Paris Opera created HOP FROG, a ballet pantomime in two acts written by Edgar Poe, choreography by Harald Lander and the music by Raymond Loucheur, scenes and costumes by Untelsteller.**

The story of HOP FROG is that of an unhappy jester who was forced to invent some new form of amusement for a wicked King and his Ministers, who were continually seeking different kinds of distractions.

HOP FROG who bears hatred towards the King for his unjust treatment to his fiancee sees a way of revenge, and plans for the King and his Ministers to attend a Fancy Dress Ball all dressed as Monkeys.

In the course of the festivities fire breaks out and the "monkeys" are burned to death.

HARALD LANDER, the Danish *Maitre de Ballet,* who has had great success with his ballets LES CAPRICES DE CUPIDON and ETUDES, has very cleverly arranged the pantomime and the dances; particularly in the first act which is set to frenzied movements.

The second act introduces the entry of the Masques. The Fancy Dress Ball, The Flower Waltz, the Grasshopper Dance, ButterflyDance, and the monkeys, etc. All this is danced in an exciting atmosphere, sinister and typical of EDGAR POE.

JEAN BABILEE could not be finer in his interpretation of HOP FROG, that half-monster, half-human being. LYANE DAYDEE, the fiancée, makes an excellent Tripetta.

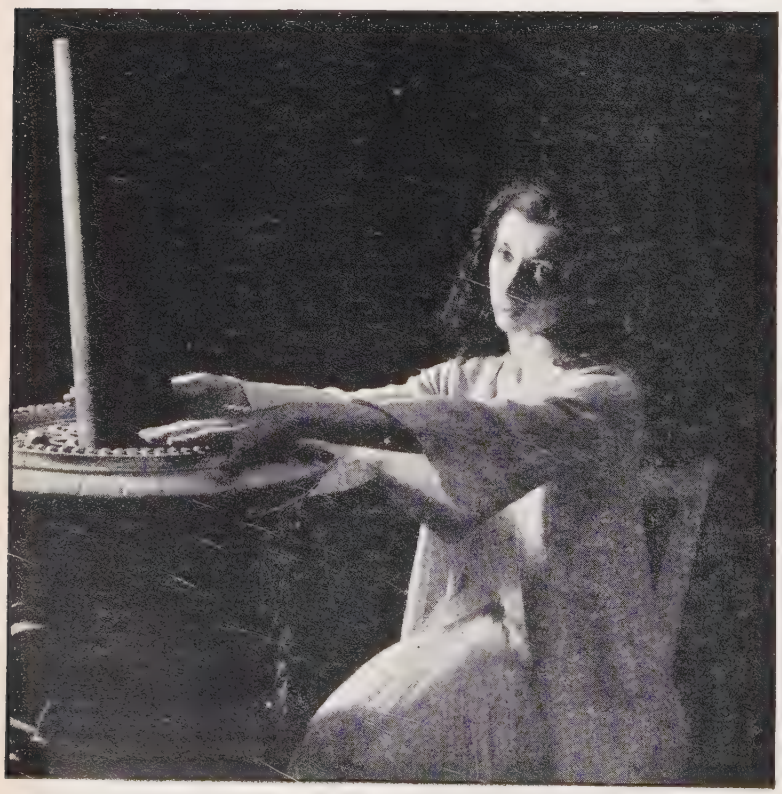
Others taking part were Claude Bessy, J. P. Andreani, Josette Clavier, Pierre Lacotte, Josette Amiel and Raoul Bari who executed a magnificent tarantella.

RAYMOND LOUCHER composed the musical score and held the audience spellbound for some 40 minutes, keeping to an animated theme throughout.

NICOLAS UNTERSTELLER retained an atmosphere of mystery and unrest, and his costumes and scenes whilst being rich in colour, were nevertheless sombre and in keeping with this work which is exceptionally difficult to produce.

At the same performance, much success was attributed to the male Opera Ballet who brilliantly executed GRAND PAS by SERGE LIFAR of whom Michael Renaud, Kalioujmy, Max Bozzoni, Algaroff, and J. P. Andreani displayed their fine talent.

⊙ JANINE CHARRATT ⊙ Photo: LIDO



### CASINO BALLET

**With the summer season at the Casino d'Enghien, near Paris, J. Etcheverry has just produced three ballets. Etcheverry was formerly choreographer at the Opera Comique and these ballets are GAVARNI, which successfully recalls this artist, with music by Henry Busser. SELECTION BEACH which is typical American, with the fun and animation of the race, the beautiful costumes are designed by Maggy Rouff and Jacques Heim.**

**The gist of the ballet is rather confusing and does not do justice to the choreography.**

**As for JARDINS SECRETS taken from Florent Schmidtt's "Suite sans esprit de suite," this was a complete flop due to lack of unison between the music and the choreography. Those taking part in the three ballets were Genevieve Kergrist, Solange Scharz, Michel Rayne, Igo Fosca, Jacques Chaurand and Michel Gevel. All well known and good dancers.**

### CHARAT

After a short tour in Germany, JANINE CHARRAT is back again in Paris. She attended an important gala performance at Tours, introducing a young dancer NADINE BOLLORE, pupil of Alexandre Volinine, who with her partner BORIS · TRAILINE roused great interest by her promising technique and gracefulness.

Following this much enjoyment was derived from Volinine's ballet DERNIERE REPETITION, which as its title suggests, deals with the ballet "behind the scenes."

### PSYCHE

**PSYCHE, the dramatic ballet by Lulli and Moliere that the "Troupe des Chanteurs, Comediens et Danseurs de Paris" presented last June at the Theatre des Champs Elysées, and which had a remarkable result in spite of the difficulty of the concentrated effort required for such an enterprise, was indeed a great success.**

**The choreography by Paul Goubé although not outstanding, was effective in style and harmony.**

**The troupe, worthy of note, were Irene Skorik, Ninon Lebertre, Michel Rayne, Derick Mendel, Yvonne Alexander and Paul Goubé himself. Especially noted: Irene Skorik, who was in excellent form and seems to have made great headway, above all in her "expressions" which are of a marked improvement.**

### CHAUVIRE

YVETTE CHAUVRE *and La Compagnie* JANINE CHARRATT *will appear at the Musical and Choreographical Festival at The Arles Theatre Antique.*

# MARY WIGMAN DANCING AGAIN

AT the Opera House, Colon, the premiere of MEDEA with choreography by **Karl Bergeest** was successful. The soloists were **Lisa Czobel** and **Alexander von Swaine.** The world premiere of this work was in America, story by **M. Graham,** music by **Samuel Barber.**

**WIGMAN AGAIN**

The only dance performance at the Ruhr Festival was by **Mary Wigman** and her group. Nearly 70 years old and again on the stage! An unusual adventure!

But her eminent personality fascinated the audience. The applause was enthusiastic! The programme included solo and group dances,


*Advertiser's Announcement*

*Ninette de Valois*

**INVITATION to the BALLET**

Here is a new edition—the sixth—of Dame Ninette de Valois famous classic, with a fresh introduction specially written by the author.

*Invitation to the Ballet* tells the story of British ballet from its earliest years and makes a thorough examination of all its aspects. It is a story which no one is more fitted to write than Dame Ninette de Valois herself who has played such a great rôle in building up the prestige of our national ballet and its exponents.

*Profusely illustrated* 21*s. net*

——THE BODLEY HEAD——


◉ By Eva Hagemann who devoted a great deal of her works to the ballet and studied for a short time in Dresden. She is known in Germany by her exhibitions in Hamburg, Karlsruhe and Mannheim.

## Report from GERMANY by EVA BÜLOW

and demonstrated the expressive style of her pupils.

ECSTASY RHYTHMS, music by **Honegger,** with an admirable disciplined choreography, could give an idea of the abstract ballets by **Oscar Schlemmer.**

THE STREET was a suite of dances or better to say pantomimic scenes? Very dismal and pessimistic.

THE TEMPLE was a chorus study, where the arms and bodies of the girls were like plants in the wind. The very gifted soloists were **Inga Weib, Gisela Herrold, Nahami Abbell** and **Manja Chmiel.**

**HAMBURG**

On July 13 was the first performance of TRIONFO DI APHRODITE by **Carl Orff** at the State Opera, Hamburg. Responsible for the choreography was **Isabella Vernici** and the soloists were **Otti Tenzel, Herbert Juzek** and **Claus Zimmermann.** Three works belong to the trilogy by **C. Orff:** Carmina burana, Carmina catulli and Trionfo di Aphrodite.

**ARCHIVE**

The first exhibition of the newly founded dance archives by **Kurt Peters** was in Hamburg. This has been built up in the last ten years on his private initiative. After the destruction in the second world war of the "Staatliche Tanzarchiv" in Berlin, the gap in this art is now refilled and Germany has again a huge international library of photographs, records, musical scores, books and cuttings all devoted to the dance. Also a new German dance magazine, "Das Tanzarchiv," appeared in June.

**IN MUNICH**

Two world premieres are reported from Munich.

First LA DAME A LA TRICORNE, story, decor and costumes all by **Jean Cocteau.** Music by **Jacques Chailly**, and choreography by **Heinz Rosen.** Soloists: **Veronica Mlakar** — La Tricorne, **Geneviève Espagnol** — La Dame, and **Boris Trailine**—The Knight.

The subject is of a goblin in the 15th–16th century and it is a simple fable.

La Dame loves a white Tricorne and when she looks in her mirror, she sees the virgin fable-animal. But the knight brings her human love and the Tricorne must die, because it can take food only by a virginal hand. The Lady deplores his death and the brothers and sisters of the Tricorne bring it back to the forest. But the knight, too, is gone and the Lady stays alone with the motto of the goblin: "Mon seul desir."

**NIGHTMARE**

The second ballet was L'INDIFFERENT, music by **Hans Haug,** decor and costumes by **Bignens** and choreogrhpy by **H. Rosen.**

This ballet is in a Paris Bohème milieu and shows the different dance and painting styles from the classic to the romantic, from the Impressionistic to the Modern.

The second novelty was the premiere at the State Opera, Munich, of THE NIGHTINGALE, a fairy-tale by **Hans Andersen,** music by **Werner Egk,** choreography by **Tatiana Gsovsky,** decor by **Helmut Jürgens,** and costumes by **Rosemarie Jakameit.**

**Patricia Miller** was the guest ballerina from the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and danced wonderfully the title role. **Natascha Trofimova** was the artificial Nightingale and the youngster **Dimitreff von Cheremeteff** the emperor.

# "Hissed Off Every Stage"

*INVITATION TO THE BALLET by Ninette de Valois. Sixth edition (The Bodley Head, 21s.).*

**INVITATION to the ballet for Ninette de Valois was not to the cloistered existence enjoyed nowadays by the dancer who goes from famous school to famous company.**

"Not only have I danced on every pier, I have been hissed off every music hall stage in England," she has said, describing her early days as a dancer.

Billed as "the miniature Pavlova," she toured the seaside resorts in her mid-teens with a juvenile troupe and later with variety acts in London and the provinces. In those days a ballet turn was always fair game for the rowdies of the second house.

One night the pandemonium was so great she could not hear the music.

"Why don't you bring down the curtain?" she asked the manager.

"We never bring the curtain down until they start throwing things," was the reply.

He knew the rules!

Then followed the more equable atmosphere of opera-ballet at Covent Garden; the hard but vital years with Diaghilev—the most important influence in her career; producing at the Abbey Theatre, and the Cambridge Festival Theatre.

Eventually she was putting on an evening of ballet once a fortnight for Lilian Baylis. The dancer became teacher and ballet mistress; choreographer and general inspirer and administrator.

Her unrivalled experience, her unique position, make this book, first published in 1937, of absorbing interest. In cool, lucid prose, enlivened by a strong sense of humour, Dame Ninette de Valois surveys the pre-war ballet scene and discusses its many aspects, revealing something of the remarkable mind and personality that has shaped ballet history. The illustrations are varied and excellent.

*BALLET IN BRITAIN SINCE THE WAR, by Clive Barnes. (C. A. Watts & Co. Ltd., 1/6d.).*

**A useful record of the ramifications of the crowded post-war ballet scene, though one may not always agree with Mr. Barnes' critical pronouncements.** P.C.

## books records galleries

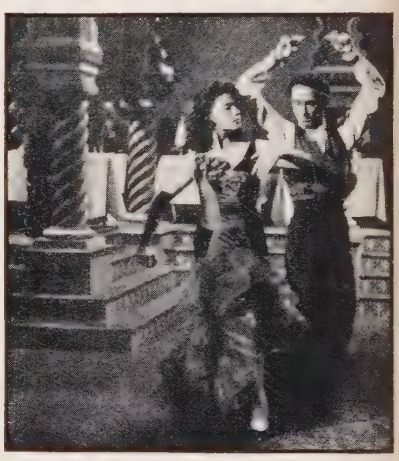
# SYMPHONIES "SUBJECTED" TO BALLET

*SYMPHONY No. 4 (Brahms), N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra (Toscanini), H.M.V. APL.1029.*

**IN 1933 the purists were greatly disturbed. Following LES PRESAGE, another symphony was being subjected to ballet, but Massine's choreography for CHORTEARTIUM was of such stature that all but the most hide-bound, eventually, forgave him. Who could help being won over by Baronova in the first movement of Verchinina's tragic interpretation of the second. From this recording one can well believe that Massine during rehearsals had this great conductor's rendering in mind, so that balletically I can thoroughly recommend this record, quite apart from its musical viewpoint.**

*TRICORNE (de Falla), LA VALSE (Ravel), SYMPHONY No. 1 (Prokofiev), L'APPRENTI SORCIER (Dukas). Philharmonia Orchestra (Igor Markevitch). COL. 33CX1049.*

**The ballet-interested will find this very good value, the recording good and Markevitch's conducting vividly recalls the ballets. Massine's dancing of the Farucca—still superlative in spite of his 50 odd years—matches the smouldering fire and vitality of da Falla's exciting music. La Valse has been used by three choreographers, Fokine, Nijinska and Helpmann. It was Helpmann's first choreographic work though, owing to pressure of work elsewhere, it was finished by Wendy Toye. This is a colourful performance of the delightful concert piece, so attractive that even those who believe they only enjoy "light music" will be charmed. L'Apprenti Sorcier, Dukas' only popular work is played with much verve.** B.C.



*Tutte Lemkow and Yvonne de Carlo in the Flamenco sequence from "Captain's Paradise."*

# HOW OUR ANCESTORS LIVED — AND DANCED!

**AN exhibition entitled "How Our Ancestors Lived, 1750-1850" continues at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, until the end of August. A number of items are of particular interest to balletgoers.**

**Several early prints show how essential it was to be proficient in a variety of dances.**

**In George Cruikshank's 'La Belle Assemblée," pride of place in the centre of the ballroom is given to the Minuet. On the left country dances are being performed while individuals demonstrate a Scot's Reel and an Irish Jig. On the right, foreign dances are depicted—German Waltz, French Quadrille and Spanish Bolero. The sequence ends with Ballet Italienne, a pas-de-deux in which the dancers wear tall feathers in thei rhair and manipulate a garland of flowers.**

**After this time only professional dancers are shown, notably in A. E. Chalon's "Pas de Quatre" and "The Graces." Many readers will recall that this little-known watercolour was reproduced in the February, 1952, issue of "BALLET TODAY" and will wish to see the original.**

**A number of books are also displayed. A copy of "The Microcosm of London," with plates by Rowlandson and Pugin, is open to show a ballet on a mythological theme being performed at the Opera House in the Haymarket in 1809.**

**About this time books of doggeral, illustrated by the leading artists of the day, were popular. In two examples exhibited, it is possible to see the high regard in which the Paris Opera Ballet was held and the equally low opinion of Indian dancing.**

**KEITH AKESTER**

# Fashion Scene at Ballet

**By PATRICIA**

★ **The last night of the Sadler's Wells season at Covent Garden was singularly badly dressed. There were, however, just four women who could be seen without having to be looked for.**

★ Ann Todd (Mrs. David Lean in private life), dressed in black tafetta, her hair silver blonde and urchin-cut —wearing an emerald green yards-long stole which made a wonderful contrast to the dress and a perfect foil for her hair.

★ **Dagmar Wynters, the model and actress, also in black but this time unrelieved. The camisole top of her dress scooped out to display a wide diamante choker and long drop earrings. Her hair dressed high, Spanish fashion, with a little kiss-curl over each ear in the latest Paris fashion (copied from the Spaniards!).**

★ Then two unknowns. One, a sophisticated woman in scarlet, wearing, as her eye-catcher, a briefer-than-brief bolero in white pique. Finishing just under the arms, fluted at the back, fastened with one small but glittering button at the throat. She wore no other jewellery.

★ **The last a young woman of about seven years of age. Her dress with its billowing knee-length skirt of navy and white nylon looked cool and gave her an air of childish sophistication and poise which was enhanced, not spoilt, as she hopped for joy on one leg when her escort presented her with a large ice!**

★ Among the worst dressed women were: The mousy blonde who wore a beige chiffon dress, and topaz jewellery with a yellow make-up. Not a splash of colour anywhere — just like a bowl of porridge!

★ **The slim woman who looked too slim in a long black sheath dress. The top, wide-cup to the waist, was too daring to be in good taste. The looks she received were amused instead of admiring.**

★ The deb. As always in a white tulle dress, this one could have done with a pressing too. Her shoulders covered by a large square of cerise chiffon which was caught to the dress by a flower in front . . . but it wouldn't stay in position and floated all over the place—the total result was "messy."

★ **The woman who committed the cardinal sin of wearing flowers, feathers, furs, veiling and a large patterned material, ALL AT ONCE. She seemed to be everywhere at once, there was so much of her!**

★ *But the four were well worth the rest.*

## ballet digest
*— continued*

● **CHAUVIRE HERE?**

**A report from Paris, unconfirmable as we go to press, has it that Yvette Chauvire will dance as guest ballerina with the Festival Ballet before the end of their London season.**

● **BERLIN FESTIVAL**

The Royal Stockholm Opera Ballet are scheduled to appear at the Berlin Cultural Festival which opens on August 30.

● **DUNHAM PUPIL**

**Katherine Dunham student, Nola Pardi, was headlining the bill last month at Tokyo Music Hall.**

● **FESTIVAL BALLET TO U.S.**

Anton Dolin will take the Festival Ballet to the United States for their first U.S. tour next year. Serge Denham's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo will be revived by a major management for a similar and concurrent tour.

● **ARENA GRECO**

**Jose Greco and his Spanish Dancers made their first outdoor appearance in New York at the Lewisohn Stadium last month to accompaniment by the Stadium Symphony Orchestra.**

● **PETIT'S 3 NEW**

The three new ballets scheduled for presentation during their Stoll season by Roland Petit's Ballets De Paris are LE LOUP, DEUIL EN 24 HEURES and CINE-BIJOU. LE LOUP is by Anouilh to Dutilleux music and with Petit choreography. It tells of a young man's love for a gypsy who convinces his wife that at times he changes into a wolf. DEUIL is by Petit to Thinet music and has a plot involving a coquette, a jealous husband and a can-can!

● **MELBA FILM**

Presshown too late for review in this issue, the biofilm MELBA (see centre pages) was described in TIME —invariably displeasing to film companies, equally invariably 100% right with audience reaction—as a series of arias in a soggily romantic yarn. The ballet sequence pictured on our centre spread is not even mentioned by TIME. We await the film with just that much more interest!

● **OKLAHOMA**

**After much rumouring of a Cinerama version of OKLAHOMA, the film version eventually started production last month in a new process. Rodgers and Hammerstein get 1,000,000 dollars cash plus having a 40% piece of the film and a 20% share in the company! The new process is Todd-AO which is on the secret list but is guessed as a poor cinema's Cinerama. Agnes de Mille's dances will be featured.**

● **MUSICALS DUE**

Jack Hylton will open WISH YOU WERE HERE in September, possibly as a replacement for LONDON LAUGHS at the Adelphi. In October THE KING AND I will replace SOUTHPACIFIC at Drury Lane.

● **MORE BAD LUCK**

**After the Paris lucklessness of Ballet Theatre (reported exclusively in BALLET TODAY last month) the Rome opening became even worse. Some of the hazards: late advertising, no prices fixed, posters had no details of times or even of theatre's address and — last straw—several hundred counterfeit tickets were sold. Terrible business resulted for Ballet Theatre with the 7,000-seater Sette Mille Theatre (planned by Mussolini as a World Fair centre and unused since the war) only a fraction full.**

● **UGANDA DANCE**

A colour film of a trek from Cairo to Uganda and the Congo is being released in the U.S. It features native Uganda and other dances. The film was shot on a safari made by Rita Hayworth and Prince Aly Khan and was originally intended as a personal home effort.

● **QUICK VISIT**

**Paul Strauss, conductor for Ballet Theatre, had a rushed return to the United States on July 13 when he left the company to fly to New York, fill two engagements conducting the NBC Symphony, and immediately fly back to rejoin Ballet Theatre. During the season he will alternate with Joseph Levine.**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# WILL IT BE A

## — QUESTION POSED BY PAMELA PRICE

**IT is the affirmed intention of the directors of the Saddler's Wells Ballet to present in future three-act, "whole evening" ballets. Many people agree that the day of the one-act ballet is almost over.**

**Ballet in future will be 3-A.**

Certainly under present economic conditions the directors of ballet companies cannot afford to ignore the marked preference for 3-act ballets both in this country and in America.

But serious ballet-lovers, too, argue that ballet—with over three hundred years of development behind it—should now, like the other theatrical arts, be capable of inventing integrated works which last up to three hours, instead of the present forty to sixty minutes.

We have, of course, seen in recent years two full length works by Ashton, CINDERELLA and SYLVIA.

But though entirely original in choreography, these were in fact nothing more than "modern" versions of older ballets to libretti and scores already composed.

They proved little, except that a modern choreographer can do what Petipa, and others, were doing over fifty years ago.

*What we would like to see now is a ballet which would have been quite outside the range of a Petipa, and which would demonstrate that there has been a development in the art of expressive dance to which Fokine, Massine, Ashton, Tudor, de Mille, Jooss, Balanchin and Robbins have contributed.*

### LOGICAL ANSWER

**The whole trend of ballet since the Diaghilev era has been towards finding some method of integrating and compressing ballet. The one-act ballet was the logical answer to the "Five Points" of Fokine, a natural revulsion from the over-decorated, the superficial, the trivial.**

In the same way, the work of the Modern Dance exponents was aimed at a simpler, more direct statement, though they sometimes failed lamentably.

Since Diaghilev, whether in the classical tradition or in the form of Modern Dance, ballet has aimed at an integrated work of the theatre, in which dance, music and decoration speak through the eye to the heart.

No ballet that comes afterwards can wholly shake off this mantle, and indeed it would be tragic if all the work of the pioneers and experimenters should be forgotten and the three-act ballet of the future were to be merely a series of divertissements linked by a slender, often preposterous "story."

**What kind of 3-A ballet then can we hope to see?**

One thing seems certain. It will have some kind of "story." It is highly unlikely that a public which complains of the "sameness" of Balanchin's plotless short works would tolerate a whole evening of abstract ballet.

The first problem then is to find a suitable libretto. Here many problems spring to mind; is the range of emotions that can be expressed through movement really as wide as some enthusiasts claim? Is it possible, in fact, to hold the interest of an audience for three acts with an art which is manifestedly designed to appeal to the emotions rather than the intellect?

Could one, for example, visualise a three-act ballet retaining the atmosphere of romantic gloom of, say APPARITIONS, or the overcharged tension of BLOOD WEDDING, or the romping humour of PINEAPPLE POLL, or the wistful heart-break of LA FETE ETRANGE?

This problem has, of course, been tackled in Russia and it is particularly unfortunate that we, in this country, have so little knowledge of the modern three-act works of Soviet ballet.

### PERMANENT HOME

**There is another problem which must loom large in the minds of those who direct our ballet companies. The 3-A ballet with its necessarily large casts (for even dancers must breathe sometimes), its large orchestra, its long rehearsal period, absolutely requires companies with a permanent base.**

SWAN LAKE could never have originated with an itinerant company, it needed the security, stability and facilities of the great Maryinski tradition behind it.

So we may find a narrowing of the field, the elimination of some smaller companies, the strengthening of others, with the always present danger of monopoly and subsequent stagnation.

If indeed the forty years domination of the one-act ballet is nearing its close and the full-length ballet is once again to ring upthe curtain, what problems it raises and what challenges!

Ballet is in many ways the most traditional of the arts but its tradition has now to include forty years of one-act works and a wealth of technical and aesthetic development which it can, and must, use in future.

*THE SLEEPING BEAUTY may have woken up again but this time she finds that Prince Charming is, in fact, a Superman and the Lilac Fairy rides, not in a chrystal barque, but in a Space Ship.*

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